

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

NO CORRELATION BETWEEN EDUCATION SPENDING AND RESULTS

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 28, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to take a look at the facts about education spending and results. The teachers' unions and other alliances promoting bureaucracy are constantly pressuring Congress to expand federal education spending by billions of dollars. But, what do the numbers show us about the effectiveness of simply spending more money on education?

A recent scholarly article by Cal Thomas pokes holes in the mantra that more education funding will help improve students' education. I have submitted the article for the RECORD. In the article, Mr. Thomas cites statistics from the Department of Education to back his claims. While the federal government has increased education spending 132 percent between 1996 and the current fiscal year, test scores have remained stagnant. The Department of Education reports 32 percent of public school fourth-graders are proficient in reading, while only 26 percent are proficient in mathematics. These figures are a dismal commentary on the state of education in the United States.

In his article, Thomas cites a study by the bi-partisan American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), further revealing the lack of correlation between education spending and better academic results. "Particularly troubling is the finding that of the 10 states that increased per-pupil expenditures the most over the past two decades, none ranked in the top 10 in academic achievement. Additionally, of the top 10 that experienced the greatest decreases in pupil-to-teacher ratios over the past two decades, none ranked in the top 10 in academic achievement."

As the House works out appropriation levels for federal education funding over the next several weeks, I strongly urge it to take a look at the statistics. More money does not mean better student results.

Instead, I commend the House to follow Cal Thomas' advice regarding how to improve academic performance. Thomas states: "Allowing parents to have the power to choose where they believe their children can best be educated is the way to get higher test scores and better learning."

Mr. Speaker, I have introduced an education tax deduction bill that is currently reported to the House floor. It would empower parents with the ability to select the best education options for their children. Rather than spending more money on bureaucratic federal programs, I recommend my colleagues pass the Back to School Tax Relief Act, H.R. 5193, and begin sending money back to the parents to spend as they deem appropriate. Only when we empower parents will we begin to see a reversal in the negative test score trends.

[From Pioneer Press, Oct. 18, 2002]

MORE SPENDING DOESN'T ALWAYS TRANSLATE INTO IMPROVED EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

(By Cal Thomas)

Democrats lament that the presumptive war with Iraq has kept them from focusing the public's attention on domestic issues.

OK, let's talk about one of their favorite domestic issues: education. Most Democratic candidates (and sometimes a few Republicans) promise that if elected, or re-elected, they will fight to spend more money for education. They imply a relationship between increased spending and better academic performance. The public has mostly accepted this line of thinking.

The federal government has spent \$321 billion on education since 1965. The worthless Department of Education, which was established in 1979 as President Jimmy Carter's payoff to the teachers' unions, has an annual budget of \$55 billion.

Yet on the DOE's own Web page, there are some embarrassing facts. Promoting its "No Child Left Behind" agenda (www.nochildleftbehind.gov/next/stats/index.html), DOE notes that education spending has increased 132 percent between 1996 and the current fiscal year. As the watchdog group Citizens Against Government Waste notes, that compares to a 96 percent budget hike for the Department of Health and Human Services and a 48 percent boost for defense over the same period.

What are our children and their parents getting for this extra money? Not much. The DOE reports just 32 percent of public school fourth-graders are proficient in math. Of those who can't read well, 68 percent are minority children, even though sharp increases in Title One spending (\$10 billion in the current budget) directed at improving basic skills among black, Hispanic and American Indian children have failed to achieve those goals.

If the federal government's own figures are not persuasive enough, a new study by the American Legislative Exchange Council are. In the ninth edition of "Report Card on American Education: A State-by-State Analysis," the study of two generations of students from 1976 to 2001 graded each state, using more than 100 measures of educational resources and achievement. ALEC is the nation's largest bipartisan, individual membership organization of state legislators.

In a news release, the ALEC says, "A key finding of the report shows there is no immediate evident correlation between conventional measures of education inputs, such as expenditures per pupil and teacher salaries, and educational outputs, such as average scores on standardized tests." Particularly troubling is the finding that of the 10 states that increased per-pupil expenditures the most over the past two decades, none ranked in the top 10 in academic achievement. Additionally, of the top 10 that experienced the greatest decreases in pupil-to-teacher ratios over the past two decades, none ranked in the top 10 in academic achievement.

The teachers' unions and the rest of the government education monopoly regularly tell us that more spending and smaller classrooms are the answer to improved test scores. But the ALEC study, along with the DOE statistics, proves that is not the case. (For a state-by-state breakdown go to www.ALEC.org.)

Allowing parents to have the power to choose where they believe their children can best be educated is the way to get higher test scores and better learning. If competition improves the products we buy, it can improve the quality of education our children receive—or, in this case, are not receiving. How much more money will it take before the public awakens to the unnecessary and ineffective education spending?

That would be one good question for the campaign trail in any debate about domestic issues.

TRIBUTE TO CATHERINE HARRIS

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 28, 2002

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the lifelong service of Catherine Harris. A dedicated civil service employee, Mrs. Harris has worked with the City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health for the past 40 years.

Mrs. Harris began her exemplary service as a Clerk-Typist in the Pharmacy Department. She eventually went on to become the only Mortality Coder for the entire health department. As a supervisor, she helped other staff learn the methods and principles used to rank importance of the cause of death for statistical purposes.

Mrs. Harris retired from the City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health on October 4, 2002. In recognition of her years of service to the Philadelphia community, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues rise to congratulate her on retirement.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION LOAN PROGRAMS SUBSIDY RATE MISCALCULATION

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 28, 2002

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, small businesses are reeling from the downturn in the economy and are struggling to acquire the capital needed to establish or expand their businesses. These same small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and provide much of the innovation and inventions of new concepts and products that large corporations are unable to develop. The Small Business Administration plays an important role in supporting and assisting small businesses in our country by offering a variety of loan programs, as well as counseling and training for all types of firms.

The Small Business Administration and its affiliates, including Certified Development Company, not to mention small businesses in general, have been struggling in recent years with user fees on loan programs and decreased assistance from Congress. Specifically, the Administration and the Office of

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